

he filled a responsible position as minister of the gospel. In old age a genial enthusiasm kept him young mentally and physically well into his 96th year.—BURNETT SMITH.

W. LEWIS MAY

One by one the older wiseheads pass away and we of the younger school, while we miss their valued advice, must realize we are growing older, and must take their place without their experience.

Tasmanian conchology without W. L. May appears incomprehensible, as for the last thirty years he has been sole arbiter. Gifted with clear judgment, a great collector, well read and methodical, his advice was ever sound; in addition he was a clever draughtsman and his "Illustrated Index" is a monument of real value.

Twenty-five years ago a "Revised Census of Tasmanian Shells" was issued under the names of Tate and May. The latter provided the majority of the material and the illustrations, while the former prepared the more technical matter. While this was passing through the press, Tate died, and since then May has continued the work alone. He was fortunately spared to complete his task, and in 1921 appeared the "Check List of the Shells of Tasmania," and in 1923 followed the "Illustrated Index," figuring every Tasmanian shell, the whole of the figures, over 1000 in number, being drawn by himself. This is the only complete illustrated account of the Mollusca of any State of Australia, and is being utilized daily in all the southern parts of Australia.

May was only sixty-four years of age and was taken seriously ill in the beginning of 1925 but recovered sufficiently to take a sea voyage through the islands. Passing through Sydney we proposed to monograph the Australian Marginellids, a group May was especially interested in. However the sea voyage came too late, and May only arrived back in Sydney on his death bed, passing away in this city on Aug. 30, 1925.

A member of the Society of Friends, May was very quiet, but never allowed his judgment to be influenced by anything

but facts, and consequently never made any enemies in any sense, being literally esteemed by every one who met him.—
TOM IREDALE, *Australian Museum, Sydney*.

SPIRULA SPIRULA (LINNE)

The following lines were suggested by a paper read by Mr. J. Henry Blake at the meeting of the Boston Malacological Club, October 6, 1925. They may possibly aid in calling the attention of many to the habits of this most interesting mollusk as described by Dr. Johs. Schmidt (*Nature*, vol. 110, p. 788, Dec. 9, 1922). Offered with apologies to the *Dana Expedition*.

The chambered shells of the Spirula,
As they float upon the sea,
Are cast on a thousand beaches
For any one to see;
But the animal that made this shell
Was long a mystery.

Linné called it *Nautilus spirula*
Which was not a very bad guess.
Lamarck called it *Spirula peroni*
(Though he'd first named it *fragilis*);
And thus quite early was started
A nomenclatorial mess.

Some said with that disk-like sucker
Attached it must surely grow,
While the rudimentary fins would prove
As a swimmer it must have been slow;
Then the chromatophores would indicate
That it lived in the mud, you know.

'T was the *Dana Expedition*
That discovered Spirula's home
Far above the oozy bottom
And below the great waves' comb;
For bathypelagic is the Spirula
And there's where it loves to roam.

It only lives in the warmer seas,
At more than a thousand feet,
Suspended head down in the water
A position hard to beat—
Though doubtless it is its chambered shell
That aids it in this feat.